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SOCIAL, HUMANITARIAN AND HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS:
SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT QUESTIONS

Statement submitted by the International Federation on Ageing, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, category I

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is circulated in accordance with paragraphs 23 and 24 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1296 (XLIV) of 23 May 1968.

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As the Economic and Social Council meets to consider the implementation of the World Summit for Social Development with regard to the eradication of poverty this year, which is dedicated to that noble aim, it is important to review the status of older persons. Recognizing the impressive growth of the world's elder population, which has already made its mark, and considering the demographic projections for the future, which are well known by now, it is important to revisit the particular references to older persons in the Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development, chapter II (Eradication of poverty), section D, paragraph 40:

"Particular efforts should be made to protect older persons, including those with disabilities, by:

"(a) Strengthening family support systems;

"(b) Improving the situation of older persons, in particular in cases where they lack adequate family support, including rural older persons, working older persons, those affected by armed conflicts and natural or

man-made disasters, and those who are exploited, physically or psychologically neglected, or abused;

"(c) Ensuring that older persons are able to meet their basic human needs through access to social services and social security, that those in need are assisted, and that older persons are protected from abuse and violence and are treated as a resource and not a burden;

"(d) Providing assistance to grandparents who have been required to assume responsibility for children, particularly of parents who are affected by serious diseases, including AIDS or leprosy, or others who are unable to care for their dependants;

"(e) Creating a financial environment that encourages people to save for their old age;

"(f) Strengthening measures and mechanisms to ensure that retired workers do not fall into poverty, taking into account their contribution to the development of their countries;

"(g) Encouraging and supporting cross-generational participation in policy and programme development and in decision-making bodies at all levels."

The International Federation on Ageing, as a member organization of the NGO Committee on Ageing, is encouraged by the deliberations of the Economic and Social Council in the present session and is grateful for this opportunity to share its views with you.